DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 072 020 **SP 006 096**

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TITLE	Personal Characteristics of Teacher Education Students.
INSTITUTION	Mississippi Univ., University. School of Education.
PUB DATE	[72]
NOTE	16p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	*Education Majors; *Elementary School Teachers; Personality Tests; *Preservice Education; *Secondary School Teachers; *Teacher Characteristics
IDENTIFIERS	Edwards Personal Preference Schedule; EPPS

ABSTRACT

This report from the University of Mississippi determined the personal characteristics of prospective teachers by the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS) and compared these characteristics over a 4-year period. The freshman and senior year EPPS scores of 37 secondary education majors and 19 elementary education majors were statistically analyzed. Six hypotheses were developed and a t-test was applied to each. Results showed that the EPPS scores differed very little for both elementary and secondary education majors over the 4-year period. However, the freshman year mean scores for achievement were significantly higher for secondary education majors, and the mean scores for dominance were higher for the elementary education group. The scores for all male subjects were compared with the University norm. The only significant difference appeared for the characteristic of aggression. The males in education scored higher. There was no significant difference for female education majors when they were compared with general female college norms. On the basis of these findings, the report recommended further study of personal characteristics to determine if minimum levels in each characteristic would aid a prospective teacher in fulfillment of his role. Two tables of statistical data were included. (BRB)

ED 072020

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PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

by

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The "competent teacher" is often described as an "intelligent, socially adequate, personally desirable, and professionally able individual." It is generally agreed by individuals engaged in the professional preparation of teachers that certain personality variables are important prerequisites for success as a teacher. Individuals with certain personal characteristics are "natural" teachers, almost irrespective of how much or what kind of professional preparation they have. Other individuals, with certain other personality characteristics, are not likely to be very successful as teachers, regardless of the quality of their professional preparation.

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Any teacher preparation program has some measure of control in insuring competence in both subject matter and instructional methods of those who complete the program. Ordinarily, however, there is little or no control--indeed, there is often no measure--of the personal characteristics of prospective teachers. Professional preparation programs may or may not be producing persons with generally-agreed-upon desirable personal characteristics as prospective teachers.

This report is of an exploratory study at the University of Mississippi intending to determine personal characteristics as measured by the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS) of prospective teachers and to compare these characteristics over a four-year period of time.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study was to test each of six null hypotheses; given on pp. 8 - 10.

Scales of the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule

Definitions, in the form of descriptions, of the 15 scales of the EPPS, as given in the Manual[2] are as follows:

1. Achievement: To do one's best, to be successful, to accomplish tasks requiring skill and effort, to be a recognized authority, to accomplish something of great significance, to do a difficult job well, to solve difficult problems and puzzles, to be able to do things better than others, to write a great novel or play.

2. Deference: To get suggestions from others, to find out what others think, to follow instructions and do what is expected, to praise others, to tell others that they have done a good job, to accept the leadership of others, to read about great men, to conform to custom and avoid the unconventional, to let others make desisions.

3. Order: To have written work neat and organized, to make plans before starting on a difficult task, to have things organized, to keep things neat and orderly, to make advance plans when taking a trip, to organize details of work, to keep letters and files according to some system, to have meals organized and a definite time for eating, to have things arranged so that they run smoothly without change.

4. Exhibition: To say witty and clever things, to tell amusing jokes and stories, to talk about personal adventures and experiences,to have others notice and comment upon one's appearance, to say things just to see what effect it will have on others, to talk about personal achievements, to be the center of attention, to use words that others do not know the meaning of, to ask questions others cannot answer.

5. Autonomy: To be able to come and go as desired, to say what one thinks about things, to be independent of others in making decisions, to feel free to do what one wants to do, to do things that are unconventional, to avoid situations where one is expected to conform, to do things without regard to what others may think, to criticize those in positions of authority, to avoid responsibilities and obligations.

6. Affiliation: To be loyal to friends, to participate in friendly groups, to do things for friends, to form new

new friendships, to make as many friends as possible, to share things with friends, to do things with friends rather than alone, to form strong attachments, to write letters to friends.

7. Intraception: To analyze one's motives and feelings, to observe others, to understand how others feel about problems to put one's self in another's place, to judge people by why they do things rather than by what they do, to analyze the behavior of others, to analyze the motives of others, to predict how others will act.

8. Succorance: To have others provide help when in trouble, to seek encouragement from others, to have others be kindly, to have others be sympathetic and understanding about personal problems, to receive a great deal of affection from others, to have others do favors cheerfully, to be helped by others when depressed, to have others feel sorry when one is sick, to have a fuss made over one when hurt.

9. Dominance: To argue for one's point of view, to be a leader in groups to which one belongs, to be regarded by others as a leader, to be elected or appointed chairman of committees, to make group decisions, to settle arguments and disputes between others, to persuade and influence others to do what one wants, to supervise and direct the actions of others, to tell others how to do their jobs.

10. Abasement: To feel guilty when one does something wrong, to accept blame when things do not go right, to feel that personal pain and misery suffered do more good than harm, to feel the need for punishment for wrong doing, to feel better when giving in and avoiding a fight than when having one's own way, to feel the need for confession of errors, to feel depressed by inability to handle situations, to feel timid in the presence of superiors, to feel inferior to others in most respects.

11. Nurturance: To help friends when they are in trouble, to assist others less fortunate, to treat others with kindness and sympathy, to forgive others, to do small favors for others, to be generous with others, to sympathize with others who are hurt or sick, to show a great deal of affection toward others, to have others confide in one about personal problems.

12. Change: To do new and different things, to travel, to meet new people, to experience novelty and change in daily routine, to experiment and try new things, to eat in new and different places, to try new and different jobs, to move about the country and live in different places, to participate in new fads and fashions.

13. Endurance: To keep at a job until it is finished, to complete any job undertaken, to work hard at a tasks, to

keep at a puzzle or problem until it is solved, to work at a single job before taking on others, to stay up late working in order to get a job done, to put in long hours of work without distraction, to stick at a problem even though it may seem as if no progress is being made, to avoid being interrupted while at work.

14. Heterosexuality: To go out with members of the opposite sex, to engage in social activities with the opposite sex, to be in love with someone of the opposite sex, to kiss those of the opposite sex, to be regarded as physically attractive by those of the opposite sex, to participate in discussions about sex, to read books and plays involving sex, to listen to or tell jokes involving sex, to become sexually excited.

15. Aggression: To attack contrary points of view, to tell others what one thinks about them, to criticize others publicly, to make fun of others, to tell others off when disagreeing with them, to get revenge for insults, to become angry, to blame others when things go wrong, to read newspaper accounts of violence.

Related Studies

Several previous studies used the EPPS scales in investigations of teachers and prospective teachers.

Using the EPPS, Jackson and Guba[3] studied a group of in-service teachers in the Chicago area. They reported that the qualities which seemed to characterize this group of teachers were their marked needs for deference, orderliness, endurance, and rejection of exhibitionistic and heterosexual strivings. They suggested that these characteristics were closely related to the ". . . stereotypic model of the teacher as sexually impotent, obsequious, eternally patient, painstaking, demanding, and socially inept; the stereotype which is frequently portrayed in mass media."[4]

Adams, et al. studied the EPPS performance of liberal arts students, education students, and in-service teachers drawn from the western Washington area. Their findings indicated that the more

involved in teaching an individual becomes, the more he seems to be characterized by docility.[5]

Even among education students, it has been supposed that there may be major differences among specialties. For example, Thorpe studied women physical education students and teachers who were considered "successful." While significant differences were found when the physical education group was compared with the normative group, the members of the physical education group showed a similarity of patterns among themselves.[6]

The effect of professional courses on personal characteristics may be negligible. Watts, et al. studied 25 graduate education students before and after a year's intensive preparation for becoming teachers of emotionally disturbed children. They found that EPPS scores remained fairly stable and that the students did not become more similar after the academic yaar.[7]

Procedure for the Study

The population for this study consisted of all University of Mississippi students who were enrolled for the professional "block" in either elementary or secondary education during the Spring Semester of 1968-69 who (1) took the EPPS when entering the University in 1965, (2) had the EPPS scores on file in the Student Counseling Center, and (3) voluntarily agreed to take the EPPS again.

The EPPS was chosen for two reasons: first, the fact that it routinely administered as part of the pre-college counseling program made it the only measure of personality available for the subjects in this study for their freshman year; second, the EPPS has been used for similar studies on pre-service and in-service teachers,

making it possible to extend these studies and to make comparisons with them.

Approximately eight weeks after the beginning of the second semester of 1968-69, the EPPS was administered to the subjects who met the criteria above. Ten of the subjects were male, and 46 were female. Of the total of 56, thirty-seven were in the secondary education professional sequence and the other 19 were elementary majors.

All data were entered on punched cards for processing. A program was written, and the University's computer was used to calculate a value of the t statistic for companion of the mean scores on each of the 15 scales of the EPPS for each of the six hypotheses given below, a total of 90 tests of significance.

Presentation of the data

The data obtained in this study are presented in Tables I and II; which follow.

> Hypothesis 1. There is no significant difference between the scores of senior elementary education majors in 1969 and the scores of the same individuals in 1965 on each of 15 characteristics, as measured by the EPPS.

From Table I, columns 1, 3, and 5, it may be seen that there was a high degree of stability of the mean scores on each of the 15 scales of the EPPS between 1965 and 1969 for the group of 19 elementary education majors. None of the values of t was significant at the 0.05 level (t=2.09), and the null hypothesis was accepted.

> Hypothesis 2. There is no significant difference between the scores of senior students in secondary education in 1969 and the scores of the same individuals in 1965 on each of 15 characteristics, as measured by the EPPS.

From Table I, columns 6, 8, and 10, it may be seen that, like the elementary education majors, there was a high degree of stability of the mean scores on each of the 15 scales of the EPPS between 1965 and 1969 for the group of 37 secondary education students. None of the values of *t* was significant at the 0.05 level (t=2.03), and the null hypothesis was accepted.

Hypothesis 3. There is no significant difference between the 1965 scores of senior elementary education majors and senior students in secondary education on each of 15 characteristics, as measured by the EPPS.

From Table I, columns 1, 6, and 11, it may be seen that on 13 of the 15 scales the mean scores in 1965 between elementary education majors and those in secondary education were similar. The values of *t* for these 13 scales were not significant at the 0.05 level (t=2.01), and the null hypothesis for these 13 scales was accepted. However, on the scales of Achievement and Dominance the mean scores differed significantly. For achievement the larger mean score came from the secondary group, and for Dominance the larger mean score came from the elementary group. The null hypothesis was rejected for these two scales.

Hypothesis 4. There is no significant difference between the 1969 scores of senior elementary education majors and senior students in secondary education on each of 15 characteristics as measured by the EPPS.

From Table I, columns 3, 8, and 12, it may be seen that on 14 of the 15 scales the mean scores in 1969 between elementary majors and those in secondary education were similar. The values of *t* for these 14 scales were not significant at the 0.06 level (t=2.01), and the null hypothesis for these 14 scales is accepted. However,

on the Succorance scale, the mean scores differed significantly, with the larger mean score coming from the elementary group. The null hypothesis was rejected for this scale.

> Hypothesis 5. There is no significant difference between the 1969 scores of senior male students who are certifying to teach and general male college norms (The University of Mississippi, n=200, 1966) on each of 15 characteristics as measured by the EPPS.

From Table II, columns 1,5, and 7, it may be seen that there was a high degree of similarity between the mean scores on each of the 15 scales of the EPPS between males preparing to teach and male norms for the university. None of the values of t was significant at the 0.05 level (t=2.23), and the null hypothesis was accepted. The t value on the scale of Aggression approached significance, with a larger mean score coming from the males preparing to teach.

> Hypothesis 6. There is no significant difference between the 1969 scores of senior female students who are certifying to teach and general female college norms (The University of Mississippi, n=212, 1966) on each of 15 characteristics, as measured by the EPPS.

From Table II, columns 2, 6, and 8, it may be seen that on two of the 15 scales (Exhibition, Dominance) there was a high degree of similarity between the mean scores of females certifying to teach and female norms for the University. Neither of these values of t was significant at the 0.05 level (t=2.02), and the null hypothesis for these two scales is accepted. However, on the great majority of the scales (13 of the 15), females certifying to teach differed from University norms. These were: Achievement, Deference, Order, Autonomy, Affiliation, Intraception, Succorance, Abasement, Nurturance, Change, Endurance, Heterosexuality, and Aggression. On these 13 scales the mean scores differed

significantly at the 0.05 level (t=2.02) and the null hypothesis was rejected. In addition, most of the differences were highly significant ($P < .01$), the exceptions being Autonomy and Change. Mean scores greater than Universty norms were found among the female teacher education students for Achievement, Order, Autonomy, Succorance, Heterosexuality, and Aggression. The University norms were higher on Deference, Affiliation, Intraception, Abasement, Nurturance Change, and Endurance.

Comparisons With Previous Studies

The findings of this study in partial agreement with other studies reported in the literature. Female education students at The University of Mississippi reflected personality patterns that are different from those elsewhere in the University somewhat similar to the Adams, et al. report that female education students were more "docile" than arts and science students. However, it is questionable that the pattern of personal characteristics identified made the female student in education more "docile" than female students elsewhere in the University. The experience of Watts, et al. with stability of EPPS scores after courses in professional education was substantiated.

On the other hand, the findings of this study for female students in education were almost in direct opposition to those reported by Jackson and Guba for in-service teachers, the only characteristic in common being Order. In addition, Thorpe's conclusion about the differences among specialty areas in education was not in agreement with the finding of few differences between elementary education majors and those in secondary education.

TABLE I

MEANS AND VALUES OF t FOR EACH OF THE SCALES OF THE EPPS BY DATE OF ADMINISTRATION AND TEACHING LEVEL

Scale	Elementary [a]					Secondary [b]					t_{E65S65}	t_{E69S69}
	1965		1969		t	1965		1969		t		
	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.		Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Ach	10.53	4.32	12.74	4.31	0.08	13.43	4.23	14.86	4.34	0.04	2.37*	1.71
Def	11.05	3.59	10.63	3.99	0.02	11.57	3.49	11.05	4.03	0.02	0.51	1.71
Ord	11.21	3.55	11.00	4.13	0.01	10.30	4.33	11.27	5.55	0.02	0.77	0.18
Exh	13.53	4.32	13.74	2.94	0.01	13.65	3.43	14.30	3.76	0.02	0.11	0.56
Aut	12.95	4.44	12.63	4.45	0.01	11.41	4.27	13.70	3.87	0.06	1.24	0.91
Aff	16.84	3.33	16.37	4.89	0.01	16.24	4.24	15.38	3.70	0.03	0.53	0.83
Int	15.37	4.54	15.53	4.20	0.01	16.14	5.00	16.05	6.11	0.00	0.55	0.33
Suc	15.16	4.46	17.21	4.30	0.08	14.51	4.43	13.05	3.76	0.04	0.50	3.66*
Dom	15.74	3.64	14.42	3.70	0.06	12.86	4.62	14.59	5.01	0.04	2.32*	0.13
Aba	15.47	4.22	13.58	5.34	0.06	16.30	4.53	12.24	4.14	0.11	0.65	1.01
Nur	16.53	4.56	15.89	5.07	0.02	16.59	4.02	14.86	4.04	0.05	0.06	0.81
Chg	14.95	4.26	17.37	5.18	0.08	14.03	5.64	15.62	4.76	0.04	0.61	1.24
End	9.16	4.63	10.21	5.03	0.04	11.92	5.56	12.24	4.63	0.01	1.83	1.48
Het	16.53	6.45	16.42	5.91	0.00	16.97	6.11	17.43	6.67	0.01	0.25	0.55
Agg	13.16	6.39	11.32	4.19	0.06	11.68	4.83	12.97	3.99	0.03	0.95	1.42
Significant value of t (0.05): 2.09										2.03	2.01	2.01

*Significant at the 0.05 level a. n=19 b. n=37

TABLE II

MEANS AND VALUES OF t FOR EACH OF THE SCALES OF THE EPPS
BY SEX, 1969 SCORES, AND NORMS

Scale	Males [a]		Females [b]		Male Norms [c]	Female Norms [d]	$t_{exp-nor}$	$t_{exp-nor}$
	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	Mean	Mean	Males	Females
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Ach	14.80	2.56	14.00	4.75	15.66	13.08	1.06	2.99*
Def	12.10	4.04	10.65	3.97	11.21	12.40	0.67	5.68*
Ord	11.10	4.09	11.20	5.31	10.23	10.24	0.67	3.10*
Exh	14.20	3.76	14.09	3.46	14.40	14.28	0.17	0.63
Aut	15.30	3.41	12.91	4.12	14.34	12.29	0.89	2.02*
Aff	15.60	3.77	15.74	4.25	15.00	17.40	0.50	5.39*
Int	13.30	5.53	16.43	5.38	16.12	17.32	1.61	2.88*
Suc	11.60	3.32	15.09	4.37	10.74	12.53	0.82	8.31*
Dom	17.00	4.02	14.00	4.55	17.44	14.18	0.35	0.58
Aba	12.70	3.49	12.70	4.84	12.24	15.11	0.42	7.84*
Nur	14.30	3.74	15.41	4.56	14.04	16.42	0.22	3.27*
Chg	14.80	2.71	16.52	5.29	15.51	17.20	0.83	2.20*
End	12.90	4.81	11.26	4.83	12.66	12.63	0.16	4.45*
Het	15.20	6.37	17.50	6.39	17.65	14.34	1.22	10.26*
Agg	14.20	2.09	12.02	4.36	12.79	10.59	2.14	4.65*
Significant value of t (0.05):							2.23	2.02

*Significant at the 0.05 level. a. n=10 b. n=46 c.a=200,1966 d. n=212,1966

Notes

1. National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards. Defining Teacher Competencies. National Education Association, Washington, D.C., 1955.

2. Edwards, Allan L. Manual for the Edwards Personal Rreference Schedule. New York: The Psychological Corporation, 1954. p. 11.

3. Jackson, Phillip W., and Egon G. Guba. "The Need Structure of In-Service Teachers: An Occupational Analysis." School Review, 65:176-192, 1957.

4. Ibid., p. 187.

5. Adams, Henry L, Don F. Blood, and Herbert C. Taylor. "Personality Differences Among Arts and Science Students, Education Students, and Experienced Teachers." The American Psychologist, 14:371, 1959.

6. Thorpe, Jo Anne. "Study of Personality Variables Among Successful Women Students and Teachers of Physical Education," The Research Quarterly, 29: 83-92, March, 1958.

7. Watts, Charles A., Calvin C. Nelson, and Robert B. McIntyre. "Similarity of Psychological Needs Before and After a Program for the Preparation of Teachers for Emotionally Disturbed Children," Exceptional Children, 34:754-755, Summer, 1968.

Commentary

In general, the personal characteristics, as measured by the EPPS, of elementary education majors (Hypothesis 1) and students in secondary education (Hypothesis 2) changed little during the college years. This implied that the teacher education program for both elementary education majors and those in secondary education had little, if any, effect on personal characteristics. Such a conclusion was hardly surprising because, at present, the teacher education program has no particular provisions for screening out or attempting to modify personal characteristics. Had there been any change it would probably have been due to happenstance or to other experiences the students had during the college years. Whether or not the teacher education program should have objectives of either (1) screening out persons with personal characteristics determined to be undesirable or (2) attempting to modify personal characteristics within the teacher education program is open to opinion. There are those who feel that the influence of personal characteristics on the teaching-learning process is sufficiently great to warrent employment of either or both of the alternatives just mentioned, just as there are those who feel that virtually anyone who wants to become a teacher should have the opportunity to prepare for a position.

At the beginning of their college careers, the personal characteristics of those in elementary education and those in secondary education were a great deal alike (Hypothesis 3), with two exceptions There is no harm in this, for most educators would agree that the teaching act is essentially the same regardless of the grade level of the learner. The meaning of the two exceptions is not obvious.

It was found that in the characteristic of Achievement, those in secondary education were more inclined than those in elementary education "to do one's best, to be successful, to accomplish tasks requiring skill and effort. . . ." This might be related to a subject matter orientation where "achievement"--in terms of marks, grade point averages, and other academic rewards--is more obvious and readily attainable than "achievement" in terms of the development of the "whole child." The fact that almost all of the male students in education are in the secondary education program probably contributed a great deal to this difference.

It was also found that in the characteristic of Dominance, those in elementary education were inclined more than those in secondary education "to argue for one's point of view, to be a leader in groups to which one belongs, to be regarded by others as a leader. . . ." The generally greater verbal ability of females, the generally greater maturity of female freshmen, and an interest in going into elementary education because one can "boss around" young children easier than older children may be partial explanations of this difference.

The reasons for these differences may be unimportant, for something in the college experience or general maturity, not necessarily attributable to the teacher education program, served to eradicate these differences. In their place, however, a new difference, in Succorance, appeared by the end of their college years. Of the seniors, those in elementary education were inclined more than those in secondary education "to have others provide help when in trouble, to seek encouragement from others, to have others be kindly. . . ." It is plausible to suggest that this difference might have been largely sex-related.

Somewhat contrary to popular opinion on this campus, male students in education had personal characteristics much like male students in the remainder of the University (Hypothesis 5). However, since personal characteristics of female prospective teachers changed little during the college years, and yet since they differed in most ways from University female norms (Hypothesis 6), it appeared that female students in education were originally (and remained so to a great extent) different in personal characteristics from female students in the remainder of the University.

More than female students elsewhere in the University, the female student in education was inclined "to do [her] best," "to have things organized," to avoid situations where [she] is expected to conform," "to have others be sympathetic and understanding about personal problems," "to engage in social activities with the opposite sex," and "to criticize others publicly." On the other hand she is less likely than females elsewhere in the University "to get suggestions from others," "to do things for friends," "to put [herself] in another's place," "to feel guilty when [she] does something wrong," "to assist others less fortunate," "to do new and different things," and "to keep at a job until it is finished."

Within limitations, greater than normal interest in excellence, organization, non-conformity, and sociability would generally be considered desirable in a female teacher. However, greater than normal interest in criticism and less than normal interest in relating to others, trying new ideas, and following through would generally be considered undesirable in a female teacher, and the pattern of scores on scales reflecting these characteristics deserve the additional attention of the Curriculum Committee and the undergraduate faculty of the School of Education.

On the basis of the limited findings of this study, it is recommended that the Teacher Education Committee of The University of Mississippi and/or the undergraduate faculty of the School of Education and/or the Curriculum Committee of the School of Education

(1) Establish a continuing and broader-scale study of the personal characteristics of the graduates or our teacher education program to verify, disprove, or enlarge upon the findings of this study, using additional and more sophisticated instruments than the EPPS, and

(2) Determine if agreement can be reached among the faculty as to certain minimum levels of personal characteristics necessary to insure that each of the graduates of our teacher education program will be competent in this respect; and, if agreement can be reached, determine how these minima might be obtained (screening before admission to the program, personality modification during the program, screening before graduation from program, etc.).